

Written evidence submitted by USPUK (AFU0006)

Progress and success of the Afghanistan Resettlement Scheme pathways and the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme

USPUK is a registered charity that supports displaced people and refugee communities in the UK.

1. As part of our Afghan Resettlement Project, we recently conducted a survey, together with *More in Common*, in order to better understand the challenges facing Afghan refugees in the UK and evaluate the progress of the ACRS pathways and the ARAP scheme. The survey reached an estimated 1 in 10 Afghans living in temporary hotel accommodation in the UK and we believe that the responses we received will be useful in assisting the Foreign Affairs Committee in its evidence session on the progress and success of the ACRS pathways and ARAP scheme.
2. In order to maximise the reach and accessibility of our survey, we organised a roundtable discussion with members of the Afghan community who were either currently living in hotel accommodation, working closely with people in hotels or were scholars. We also recruited Afghan coordinators to disseminate the survey among their communities and networks, and made the survey available in Dari, Pashto and English.
3. The results of our survey indicated that the primary concerns of the Afghan refugee community in the UK are access to financial support to secure housing and access to employment opportunities. Another issue that emerged was a general lack of knowledge in the cohort about the existing systems of financial and housing support available to Afghan refugees in the UK. Our survey shows the importance of ensuring that services offered by the government are tailored to the specific needs and requirements of the community in question. It also illustrates the need to provide further information to displaced Afghans to explain what government support they are entitled to, how they can access it and which organisations can provide additional support, particularly with employment. USPUK is currently working on an information pack that will be provided in English, Dari and Pashto, in order to increase accessibility, overcome language barriers and guide refugees through unfamiliar bureaucratic processes.

Some highlights of the survey:

4. Out of the entire Afghan cohort, 31 per cent were highly educated and already proficient in English, while 18 per cent required some support and 51 per cent required substantial support to resettle in the UK. Based on this data, it can be assumed that those who were

highly educated and fluent in English could easily integrate and find work in the UK. It was found that Afghan women were more likely to struggle with English language skills.

5. The survey revealed that Afghans generally had a positive experience with the British people, with over half rating it a nine or a ten out of ten. On average they rated the trust in the UK government at 7.05 out of 10.
6. For most Afghan respondents, proximity to job opportunities was the most crucial factor in deciding where to live. However, the majority of respondents lacked essential information regarding housing and employment.

Link to the survey: <https://www.moreincommon.org.uk/our-work/research/welcoming-afghans-in-their-own-words/>

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